

North Yorkshire Council

Scarborough and Whitby Area Committee

2 March 2026

Whitby Cliff Lift

Report of the Corporate Director Environment

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the committee of the findings of the second inspection of the lift shaft in January 2026 by Anglo American.
- 1.2 The Area Committee to note the report and provide their comments.
- 1.3 To note that the options previously presented on 19 September 2025 will now be presented to Executive for the future of the Whitby Cliff Lift and replacement bus service.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At its meeting on 19 September 2025, the Area Committee received a report setting out the options for the future of the Whitby Cliff Lift and the findings of a public consultation into the Whitby Cliff lift replacement bus service.
- 2.2 The committee resolved to:
 - i. Vote against the recommendation to decommission Whitby Cliff Lift
 - ii. Invite Anglo American to carry out a further investigation after the winter in the new year
 - iii. Request a public consultation on the future of the Cliff Lift

3.0 NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

- 3.1 A steady increase in water ingress has caused corrosion of the structure. There is no easy solution to prevent this. Water ingress also causes more frequent renewal of operational parts to lift car and mechanisms. Some parts are required to be renewed annually due to this.
- 3.2 The top station building needs structural remedial works as there is cracking in the brick pillars, and the roof is bowing in places. The lifting gear is within the top station so would need to be removed or protected in situ to before any repairs could take place.
- 3.3 A new ventilation system needs to be incorporated within the facility to reduce the humidity.
- 3.4 As requested by the Committee, Anglo American undertook a further inspection of the lift shaft on 21 January 2026.
- 3.5 The findings of the inspection were largely the same as the previous inspection on 20 August 2025. A copy of their revised inspection report is included at Appendix A.
 - There was a small amount of water ingress around the ring beam due to rain.
 - The rest of the shaft remains relatively dry.

- 3.6 The issue for the Council remains the same. Despite no change in the conditions between August and January, water ingress and moisture remain the problem. The fact that the shaft is dry now does not mean that the situation has changed. Water ingress and moisture caused the initial failure of the lift and will still be required to be addressed if the lift is brought back into use.
- 3.7 The lift can be repaired and brought back into use for the sum of approximately £599k. This does not include allowance for any further deterioration since 2020 which would be subject to further surveys. Whilst this would bring the lift back to working order by repairing defects and replacing parts, it would not address the fundamental issue causing the defects which is the significant water ingress, moisture accumulation and corrosion in the structure. It also does not address the ongoing operation of the lift including the seasonal employment of a lift driver and annual testing and maintenance.
- 3.8 The cost of properly investigating the water ingress and moisture, identifying the extent of the problem and undertaking a feasibility study for a waterproofing and ventilation solution is estimated to be in the order of £25-50k, dependent upon the extent of surveys required. The cost of the waterproofing and ventilation solution is unknown until these investigations are carried out.
- 3.9 The cost of the options to decommission the lift ranged from £199k to £538k.
- 3.10 The Area Committee is invited to provide further comment on the findings of the latest inspection.

4.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES

- 4.1 No further consultation has taken place.
- 4.2 Publicly available comments still show an overwhelming support for the re-opening of the lift, and any future decision by the Executive will be taken within this context and the petition previously received from Cllr. Trumper.
- 4.3 At its meeting to decide the future of the cliff lift, Executive will also consider the future of the free replacement bus service. The provision of the replacement bus service has been subject to public consultation, and this is a legal requirement under the Equality Act.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications as a result of this report.
- 5.2 However, the cost of the future decision on the cliff lift and bus service, need to be considered in the context of the Council's wider financial position which is set out in the report to Executive of 20 January 2026 titled Revenue Budget 2026/2027 and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 No legal implications as a result of this report.

7.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 No equalities implications as a result of this report. Original EIA available at Appendix B.

8.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 No climate change implications as a result of this report. Original CCIA available at Appendix C

9.0 RECOMMENDATION

The Area Committee is requested to note the report and provide their comments.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A - Anglo American Advice
Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment
Appendix C – Climate Change Impact Assessment

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Report to Scarborough and Whitby Area Committee dated 19 September 2025

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County Hall
Northallerton
22 January 2026

Report Author – Chris Bourne, Head of Harbours and Coastal Infrastructure
Presenter of Report – Chris Bourne, Head of Harbours and Coastal Infrastructure

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.